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ABSTRACT

This book helps secondary school teachers understand how to use explanation as a teaching method. It explores strategies for building up a repertoire of ideas, approaches, and techniques that allow teachers to develop effective explanatory skills, offering a mixture of activities, discussion points, and classroom-based findings that have been proven successful. Section 1, "What is Explaining?," introduces what an explanation is and what is it used for. Section 2, "Strategies of Explanation," investigates various strategies employed by people when explaining the use of questions, the type of structure to be found in explanations, and the use of ancillary aids. Section 3, "Analyzing Explanations," explores levels of explanation, analysis of explaining using observation schedules and other approaches, and the need to match explanations to individuals and groups. Section 4, "Knowing the Subject Matter," discusses actual content of the explanation, subject matter covered, and coping strategies for handling students' spontaneous questions. Section 5, "Effective Explaining," describes such issues as use of an appropriate language register, the place of analogies, and the qualities of clarity and fluency. Section 6, "Feedback," concentrates on evaluation of explanations, the type of feedback available, assessment of learning, and ways to improve teaching. (Contains 20 references.) (SM)

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